

**Memorandum on President's
Community Empowerment Board**

March 3, 1998

Memorandum for the Vice President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of Defense, the Attorney General, the Secretary of the Interior, the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of Commerce, the Secretary of Labor, the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Transportation, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Secretary of Education, the Chair of the Council of Economic Advisors, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, the Administrator of the Small Business Administration, the Director of National Drug Control Policy, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Administrator of the General Services Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Chief Executive Officer of the Corporation for National and Community Service, the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality, the Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy, the Assistant to the President for Economic Policy

Subject: President's Community Empowerment Board

In order to advance the efforts of the President's Community Empowerment Board (CEB) and to facilitate interagency coordination and cooperation, I hereby order the following:

The Secretary of Defense, the Secretary of Energy, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, the Director of the Federal Emergency Management Administration, the Administrator of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, and the Chair of the Council on Environmental Quality will become members of the CEB.

With these additional members, I am confident that we will be able to better provide distressed communities with a single Federal

forum dedicated to helping them address their economic and community needs.

William J. Clinton

NOTE: This memorandum was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4.

**Message to the Congress Reporting
on Bosnia-Herzegovina**

March 3, 1998

To the Congress of the United States:

I hereby certify that the continued presence of U.S. armed forces, after June 30, 1998, in Bosnia and Herzegovina is required in order to meet the national security interests of the United States, and that it is the policy of the United States that U.S. armed forces will not serve as, or be used as, civil police in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

This certification is presented pursuant to section 1203 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 1998, Public Law 105-85, and section 8132 of the National Defense Appropriations Act for Fiscal year 1998, Public Law 105-56. The information required under these sections is in the report that accompanies this certification. The supplemental appropriations request required under these sections is being forwarded under separate cover.

America has major national interests in peace in Bosnia. We have learned from hard experience in this turbulent century that America's security and Europe's stability are intimately linked. The Bosnian war saw the worst fighting—and the most profound humanitarian disaster—on that continent since the end of the Second World War. The conflict could easily have spread through the region, endangering old Allies and new democracies alike. A larger conflict would have cast doubt on the viability of the NATO alliance itself and crippled prospects for our larger goal of a democratic, undivided, and peaceful Europe.

The Dayton framework is the key to changing the conditions that made Bosnia a fuse in a regional powder keg. It is decisively in American interests to see Dayton implemented as rapidly as feasible, so that peace becomes self-sustaining. U.S. leadership is as

essential to sustaining progress as it has been to ending the war and laying the foundation for peace.

I expect the size of the overall NATO force in Bosnia and Herzegovina will remain similar to that of the current SFOR. However, the U.S. contribution would decline by about 20 percent, as our Allies and partners continue to shoulder an increasing share of the burden.

Although I do not propose a fixed end-date for this presence, it is by no means open-ended. Instead, the goal of the military presence is to establish the conditions under which Dayton implementation can continue without the support of a major NATO-led military force. To achieve this goal, we have established concrete and achievable benchmarks, such as the reform of police and media, the elimination of illegal pre-Dayton institutions, the conduct of elections according to democratic norms, elimination of cross-entity barriers to commerce, and a framework for the phased and orderly return of refugees. NATO and U.S. forces will be reduced progressively as achievement of these benchmarks improves conditions, enabling the international community to rely largely on traditional diplomacy, international civil personnel, economic incentives and disincentives, confidence-building measures, and negotiation to continue implementing the Dayton Accords over the longer term.

In fact, great strides already have been made towards fulfilling these aims, especially in the last ten months since the United States re-energized the Dayton process. Since Dayton, a stable military environment has been created; over 300,000 troops returned to civilian life and 6,600 heavy weapons have been destroyed. Public security is improving through the restructuring, retraining and reintegration of local police. Democratic elections have been held at all levels of government and hard-line nationalists—especially in the Republika Srpska—are increasingly marginalized. Independent media and political pluralism are expanding. Over 400,000 refugees and displaced persons have returned home—110,000 in 1997. One third of the publicly-indicted war criminals have been taken into custody.

Progress has been particularly dramatic since the installation of a pro-Dayton, pro-democracy Government in Republika Srpska in December. Already, the capital of Republika Srpska has been moved from Pale to Banja Luka; media are being restructured along democratic lines; civil police are generally cooperating with the reform process; war criminals are surrendering; and Republika Srpska is working directly with counterparts in the Federation to prepare key cities in both entities for major returns of refugees and displaced persons.

At the same time, long-standing obstacles to inter-entity cooperation also are being broken down: a common flag now flies over Bosnian institutions, a common currency is being printed, a common automobile license plate is being manufactured, and mail is being delivered and trains are running across the inter-entity boundary line.

Although progress has been tangible, many of these achievements still are reversible and a robust international military presence still is required at the present time to sustain the progress. I am convinced that the NATO-led force—and U.S. participation in it—can be progressively reduced as conditions continue to improve, until the implementation process is capable of sustaining itself without a major international military presence.

William J. Clinton

The White House,
March 3, 1998.

NOTE: This letter was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on March 4.

Remarks Supporting Food Safety Legislation

March 4, 1998

The President. Thank you very much for the terrific remarks. Let me—first I want to move Senator Mikulski's box. [*Laughter*]

Senator Barbara Mikulski. I don't want it to be a public health hazard. [*Laughter*]

The President. Put it on some of those little germs. [*Laughter*]